

Annual Governing Body Report to Parents 2024-2025

Together We

Excel



Message from the Chair of Governors:

Dear Parents, Grandparents, Carers, and Pupils,

Over the past year, our school has continued to grow and go from strength to strength. Our pupils have once again shown strong attitudes to learning, kindness towards one another, and a real pride in their school. These qualities remain at the heart of our success. The Headteacher, staff, and Governing Body have continued to build on previous Estyn recommendations, strengthen the Curriculum for Wales, and ensure that wellbeing, attendance, and high standards remain central to school life.

I am delighted to share some very good news regarding our school's recent recognition by Estyn, published in September 2025. Following a thematic visit in February 2024 focusing on the teaching of the Curriculum for Wales, Gellifaelog Primary School was featured in Estyn's national report in recognition of the high quality of its curriculum and teaching. Inspectors observed lessons, spoke with learners, reviewed pupils' work, and evaluated our curriculum approach. The nationally published report includes a section that highlights good practice at our school, reflecting the commitment and skill of our staff.

Further to this, Estyn carried out another inspection visit in December 2025. Inspectors commented very positively on the warm welcome they received and the open, professional way in which the school engaged with the process. They praised both staff and pupils as "absolutely lovely" and noted the calm, purposeful atmosphere seen across classrooms. Behaviour and attitudes to learning were described as strong, with pupils settling quickly, listening well, and engaging positively with their work.

Inspectors also recognised the school's purposeful planning, which supports clear progression in skills and helps pupils build their understanding securely over time. They noted that assessment is used well to adapt teaching and review learning. The development of pupil independence was also praised, from younger pupils choosing resources with confidence to older pupils working well in collaborative tasks.

Leadership was highlighted as a key strength. Inspectors recognised the clear shared vision for the school, strong systems for middle leadership, and a well-embedded approach to monitoring, evaluation, and review. The inspection team ended their feedback with a clear "well done" to Gellifaelog Primary School.

We extend our sincere thanks to the Headteacher, teachers, support staff, and everyone who works behind the scenes to create the calm, caring, and purposeful environment our children benefit from each day. We also thank our Governing Body colleagues for their time, challenge, and support, and we

warmly acknowledge the continued efforts of the PTA and volunteers who help provide such valuable opportunities for our pupils.

None of this would be possible without the ongoing support of you, our parents, grandparents, guardians, and carers. Your role in encouraging attendance, supporting learning at home, and working in partnership with the school continues to make a real difference to your child's education.

As we look ahead, we remain fully committed to working together to ensure that Gellifaelog Primary School continues to improve and thrive. Thank you for your trust, your support, and your shared commitment to the success and wellbeing of our children.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Joann Warner

Chair of Governors

Message from the Headteacher:

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to our Annual Report to Parents. This document is a snapshot of a busy and successful year for our school, where we have focused on **embedding change and building on our strengths**.

This past year has been about expanding our horizons and ensuring our pupils have the best possible opportunities to shine. We are proud that the quality of education and teaching your children receive continues to be good, supporting every child to thrive.

Our commitment to the Curriculum for Wales is now becoming **sustained and embedded**. This is a significant achievement, and it ensures that the learning experiences are authentic, exciting, and right for our children here in Merthyr. We are proud of the careful, meaningful progress the staff have made.

We have received **external challenge and support** from the regional consortium, which has helped us to refine our practice and target our

improvements effectively. This, along with our own rigorous self-evaluation, has been validated by a recent Estyn finding that the **standards that pupils achieve are good**. This external recognition is a testament to the hard work of our whole school community.

We continue to see a **positive improvement in behaviour and the overall feel of the school**, creating a calm, secure, and respectful atmosphere that allows learning to flourish. We know there is always room for improvement, and will continue to push forward so every child can EXCEL!

Like many schools in Wales, we are operating under significant financial pressure. We are committed to making prudent, innovative decisions with our resources to ensure the school's sustainability. Despite this, our priority remains the same: to create a nurturing environment where every child can achieve their potential.

I would like to thank our staff for their tireless energy, and our Governing Body for their critical friendship and support. Finally, thank you to our families. We are proud of what we have achieved together and look forward to another year of success.

Mr J. Voros
Headteacher

School Contact Details

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Information about Holding a Parents' Meeting

Parents can request up to three meetings per year with their school's governing body. This replaces the previous requirement to hold an annual parents' meeting. The governing body must hold a meeting if it receives a written request from parents of registered pupils at the school requesting a meeting and it is satisfied that each of the following conditions are met:

- The request contains the signatures of the required minimum number of parents (30 parents) of registered pupils at the school.
- The meeting requested is for the purpose of discussing a matter relating to the school.

Governing Body Information

The clerk to the governing body is Mrs Emma France Emma.France@merthyr.gov.uk.

Name	Role	Term of Office Ends
Dr. Joann Warner	Community Governor / Chair of Governors	27.02.27
Mr Paul Phillips	Community Governor / Vice Chair of Governors	07.07.29
Mrs Nia Waghorn	Community Governor	12.7.27
Mr Anthony Griffiths	Local Authority Governor	07.05.29
Mr Saeif Jablaoui	Local Authority Governor	10.09.27
Ms. Samantha Warner	Parent Governor	17.1.28
Mr Matthew James	Staff Governor	23.11.29
Mrs Lauren Waythe	Teacher Governor	09.10.28
Mr James Voros	Headteacher	

We still have a number of parent and local authority vacancies on our Governing Body - if you are interested, please do get in touch with the school.

School Performance and Attendance

There is currently no national performance data provided for primary schools.

The school continues to build on work to encourage and support attendance at school. **The school's target for 2024-25 was 92.0%.** Attendance overall at the school is lower than target, and one of the lowest schools overall in Merthyr Tydfil. It is vital that children are in school every day when they are well enough. Areas of work include:

- Class Attendance trophy for highest weekly / termly attendance

- Rewards for classes with repeated, high attendance
- 100% attendance rewards
- Support meetings for families to help to remove barriers to good attendance – including support plans, and referral to external agencies
- An attendance action group within the school consisting of staff and governors to focus on specific attendance concerns
- Appointing pupil Attendance Ambassadors
- Letters informing parents of pupil current attendance

Attendance for the School Year 2024/25

Group	Total No of Pupils	Authorised Absences			Unauthorised Absences		
		No of Pupils	% of Pupils	% of Sessions	No of Pupils	% of Pupils	% of Sessions
Year R	19	16	84.2	5.5	14	73.7	4.3
Year Y1	29	26	89.7	7.2	25	86.2	4.6
Year Y2	37	35	94.6	6.8	26	70.3	3.4
Year Y3	32	29	90.6	5.5	28	87.5	4.1
Year Y4	32	32	100.0	7.0	29	90.6	4.3
Year Y5	25	20	80.0	4.8	14	56.0	2.1
Year Y6	31	27	87.1	6.0	26	83.9	4.6
Totals	205	185	90.2	6.2	162	79.0	4.0

Curriculum Information

The school's curriculum was launched in September 2022, it underwent further development and refinement ahead of September 2023, and following further listening to parents, children and staff, we have a comprehensive curriculum that is progressive for children across their time in the school, balancing a good range of skills, knowledge and experience, tailored to being citizens of our local community in Merthyr, and Wales and the wider world. Further information is available on the [school's website](#).

To see the most up-to-date version of our Curriculum Intent Statement, please [click here](#).

A one-page picture of our curriculum offer is available here:

[Our Curriculum Offer | Gellifaelog Primary School](#)

Community and Wider Links

During 2024/2025, the school has continued to develop its links with organisations and members of the local community.

- Received visits from Rob Davies at Elim Church, PC Rogers and
- PC Meg- School Liaison Officers, as well as visits from PCSO Hadley.
- Hosted Family Learning sessions with Multiply
- Hosted a range of Community Focussed Schools events such as a reading workshop, "Stay and Play", and other family engagement sessions.
- External percussion workshops with Upbeat
- Links with Merthyr College Sports Science students
- Opportunities to visit the Compass Hub for parents with pupils exploring careers.
- The school worked with Technquest on STEM projects and visits. (Science Technology, Engineering and Maths)
- Further work with the safety partnership and our Junior Road Safety Officers.
- We are so pleased that the school PTA have been actively involved in hosting a range of events for pupils, and for families – we are grateful to the small, dedicated team that organise and run these events on our behalf. Thank you! - At the end of the year 2024-25, a new committee was elected. A thank you to Mrs Emma Price, outgoing chair, for her commitment.

Sporting and Extra Curricular Activities

Extra-curricular club opportunities have included sports such as rugby, football, cricket and netball. Plans have been underway this year to develop our extra-curricular activities. The children had the opportunity to play in a number of friendly matches and tournaments within the cluster of schools, and further across Merthyr. The school choir also had the opportunity to represent Merthyr at the "Cylch" level of the Urdd Eisteddfod. As did a number of individual soloists and speakers! Da iawn!

As a school we work to balance the vision of allowing all children to develop their experiences, skills and fitness, allowing all to achieve success and to enjoy, as well as developing that aim for excellence, competitions and working within a team.

School Dates for 2025-2026

This is the **current school year**:

Academic Year 2025/2026

TERM	TERM BEGINS	HALF TERM STARTS	HALF TERM ENDS	TERM ENDS
AUTUMN 2025	Monday 1 September	Monday 27 October	Friday 31 October	Friday 19 December
SPRING 2026	Monday 5 January	Monday 16 February	Friday 20 February	Friday 27 March
SUMMER 2026	Monday 13 April	Monday 25 May	Friday 29 May	Monday 20 July

INSET Days:

1. Monday, 1 September 2025
2. Tuesday, 2 September 2025
3. Friday, 13 February 2026
4. Monday 13th April 2026
5. Friday, 1 May 2026
6. Monday, 20 July 2026

Policy Review

In 2024-2025, the following policies were reviewed and adopted by the governing body:

- Admissions
- Governor Visits Protocol
- Safeguarding
- Sickness Absence
- Governor Allowances
- Resolution Policy
- Performance Management / Development Policy
- Whistleblowing
- Pay
- VAWDASV
- Whole School Approach to Mental Health
- GDPR Policies – Consent, Data Breach, and Subject Access Request

In 2025-2026, all school policies will be reviewed as a school - ensuring an annual cycle of monitoring and updating policies.

A number of policies are available on the school's website, and other policies are available upon request.

Our School Improvement Priorities 2025-2026 (This Year)

- Priority 1 - Ensure consistent, progressive progress of pupils' digital skills in Interacting and Collaborating and Producing, across the curriculum, through staff development and shared practice.
- Priority 2 - Build a culture and a love of reading, embedding effective phonics approaches for younger pupils, and developing higher-order reading skills in KS2.
- Priority 3 - Further strengthen family and community-focussed partnerships to enrich learning and the school curriculum, and promote pupil wellbeing.
- Priority 4 - Enhance wellbeing through stakeholder feedback and develop pupils' empathy and emotional literacy.

School Prospectus

The school's prospectus is available to view on our school website.

Language Category of the School

The language category of the school at Gellifaelog Primary School is EM (English)

Welsh Language

As part of the curriculum, the school supports pupils to develop their spoken, written and reading skills in the medium of Welsh as a second language.

Children are also given opportunities during the year to develop their knowledge and understanding of the culture and heritage of Wales.

Provision of Toilet Facilities

The school provides sufficient toilets for the number of pupils on roll. These toilets are cleaned on a daily basis.

School Finances

The following statement provides an overview of the financial year 2024-2025.

As outlined last year, due to the challenging financial circumstances facing all public bodies across Wales, the challenges of the school, and variance in numbers on roll, the school is in the second year of a recovery plan from a deficit budget. The school's Finance Committee comprising of experienced Governors has a plan to reduce this deficit over a three year period.

The school's "Capitation" is the spending on resources such as books, pupil equipment, and overall resourcing of the school itself.

Spending / Income Area	Estimate	Actual	Year End Actual	Under / Over Spend:
Staffing Costs	1147583	1179902	1179902.09	-32319.09
Premises				
Mutual Fund	6548	6547.63	6547.63	0.37
Repairs and Maintenance (inc. Service Charges)	25000	24383.81	24383.81	616.19
Grounds Maintenance	1835	0	0	1835
NNDR , Council Tax	24290	24290.34	24290.34	-0.34
Hire of Facilities	0	0	0	0
Electricity	18605	18555.71	18555.71	49.29
Gas (inc. Solid & Oil Fuel)	13551	15610.9	15610.9	-2059.9
Water	4180	6416.25	6416.25	-2236.25
Telephones	1300	886.71	886.71	413.29
Insurances	3474	3484.73	3484.73	-10.73
Disposal of Waste	5517	5094.04	5094.04	422.96
Cleaning Contractor Payments	0	0	0	0
Cleaning Materials	4682	2867.19	2867.19	1814.81
Total Premises	108982	108137.3	108137.31	844.69
Supplies & Services				
SLA Local Authority Services	161589	161588.7	161588.65	0.35
Peripatetic Music Sessions	5094	5094.38	5094.38	-0.38
Broadband Charges & Sustainability	7252	7252.85	7252.85	-0.85
Capitation	25000	22309.01	22309.01	2690.99
Photocopying & Printing	2500	1776.97	1776.97	723.03
Postages	0	85	85	-85
Stationery & Office Expenses	0	0	0	0
Other Expenses / Supplies	0	0	0	0
Subscriptions	0	-1975	-1975	1975
Purchase of Food Provisions	500	580.63	580.63	-80.63
Purchase of Equipment & Materials	0	0	0	0
Maintenance of Equipment	0	0	0	0
Equipment Leasing / Hire Charges	4000	3692.03	3692.03	307.97
Purchase of Computer Equipment	3000	4649.42	4649.42	-1649.42
Maintenance of Computer Equipment	0	0	0	0
Training Courses / Seminars	2800	1559.5	1559.5	1240.5
Copyright & Licence	955	1164.77	1164.77	-209.77
Professional Fees	119	0	0	119
Examination Fees	0	0	0	0
Schools Performance Management	0	0	0	0
Educated Off Site	5200	6814.12	6814.12	-1614.12
School Uniforms	0	0	0	0
Private Fund Expenditure	0	0	0	0
Educational Activities	0	5335.21	5335.21	-5335.21
Purchases for Resale	0	0	0	0
Special Projects	0	0	0	0
Contributions	0	0	0	0
Internal Recharges	300	123.59	123.59	176.41
Total Supplies & Services	218309	220051.1	220051.13	-1742.13
Grant Resources / School Standards	0	0	0	0

Grant Resources / Equity	600	1300	1300	-700
Grant Resources / Other	0	0	0	0
Total Grant Expenditure	600	1300	1300	-700
Transport				
Car Allowances & Travel Expenses	0	0	0	0
Leasing / Hire of Vehicles	0	0	0	0
Vehicle Insurance / Licences	0	0	0	0
Repairs & Maintenance of Vehicles & Petrol	0	0	0	0
Purchase Of Vehicles	0	0	0	0
Total Transport Costs	0	0	0	0
Gross Expenditure (A)	1475474	1509391	1509390.53	-33916.53
INCOME				
Miscellaneous Income				
Capitation Income	6495	5881.79	5881.79	-613.21
Other Cover Income	3069	0	0	-3069
Insurance Income	0	900	900	900
WG Grant & CSC Income	0	6544.87	6544.87	6544.87
Internal Income (inc. Grants)	0	15900	15900	15900
Other Income	2510	-3433.37	-3433.37	-5943.37
Special Projects	0	0	0	0
Total Miscellaneous Income (B)	12074	25793.29	25793.29	13719.29
Net Expenditure (A - B)	1463400	1483597	1483597.24	-20197.24
Funding				
School's Balance 1st April 2024	-93400	-93400.2	-93400.16	-0.16
Formula Allocation	1058149	1058149	1058149.38	0.38
Schools Standards	123046	150410.4	150410.41	27364.41
Schools Equity (inc. EY, CLA)	136850	138856.6	138856.6	2006.6
Schools Reform	13369	16274.91	16274.91	2905.91
Schools Additional Support	82365	82365.24	82365.24	0.24
Total Funding	1320379	1352656	1352656.38	32277.38
[Surplus / (Deficit)] (Total Funding Less Net Expenditure)	-143021	-130941	-130940.86	12080.14
Analysis of Surplus / (Deficit)				
Committed Expenditure	0	0	0	0
Contingency	-143021		-130940.86	12080.14
School's Balance 31st March 2025 [Surplus / (Deficit)]	-143021		-130940.86	12080.14
SUMMARY	Estimate		Yr End	Under / (Over)
	2024/2025		Projection	Spend
	£		£	£
Total Funding	1320379		1352656.38	32277.38
LESS Net Expenditure	1463400		1483597.24	-20197.24
School's Balance 31st March 2025 [Surplus / (Deficit)]	-143021		-130940.86	12080.14

Additional Learning Needs

Under the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (ALNET) Act in Wales, our school identifies and provides tailored support for pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) to ensure they can fully access education. This includes creating Individual Development Plans (IDPs) in collaboration with parents, pupils, and relevant professionals to outline the support needed. Our school also has a graduated response to need, where small, time-bound interventions are first put in place, open to all pupils (Universal Learning Provision.) Pupil Action Plans (PAPs) are put in place for children requiring more targeted, specific intervention on a short-term basis (Universal Learning Provision Plus.) If the gap in learning does not close, the school would initiate the process of an IDP. Our school works to foster an inclusive environment, offering a person-centred approach that considers each child's unique strengths and challenges. Governors play a key role in overseeing these provisions and ensuring the school meets its statutory responsibilities to support every learner effectively.

The school offers a range of provision and resources to support pupils with additional needs. These include:

- A range of short-term and focussed interventions in reading, numeracy, communication and other basic skills
- Bucket Time strategies, supporting engagement and focus
- ELSA – Emotional Literacy strategies to support regulation and managing feelings
- In-house “Stepping Stones” provision focusing on emotional regulation and social skills and supporting pupils to access their IDP work.
- Referral to external agencies and support: Such as SHINE (Wellbeing and Mental Health), The Baxter Project (Confidence and Wellbeing), Exchange (Counselling and supportive work) and the Early Help Hub for other support and services.

Brief overview of progress towards improvement priorities in 2024 to 2025:

Priority 1: Leadership and Community

The Target: "To develop and sustain leadership at all levels, with a focus on the role of pupils, parents and the wider community."

What we did and the impact:

- Clearer Planning: We reviewed our annual calendar for monitoring school performance to ensure we balance staff workload while keeping high standards.
- Empowering Staff: We assigned clear strategic roles to leaders and teachers, giving them the time and support to drive improvements independently.
- Student Leaders: We established pupil leadership groups. Students now feel a greater sense of ownership over school decisions and take pride in their roles.
- Community Success: We strengthened partnerships with local businesses and organizations. A highlight was achieving the Heart of the Community Silver Award.
- Parent Events: We held various workshops and celebrations. While celebration events were very popular, we found that "learning-focused" sessions need more work to keep attendance high.
- Stronger Governance: Our Governing Body has become more robust and strategic, with governors actively visiting the school to understand our work firsthand.
- **Overall Impact: Leadership capacity has improved significantly since our last inspection, with clear direction and confident staff.**

Priority 2: Teaching, Assessment, and Progress

The Target: "To ensure that teaching enables the effective assessment and progress of pupils, across the curriculum."

What we did and the impact:

- Understanding Progress: Staff undertook training to better understand how children progress in literacy and numeracy, ensuring we meet individual needs.
- Better Assessment: We moved away from testing that wasn't helping us to improve outcomes for children (like Schonell spellings) to focus on high-frequency words and other assessments that better suit our pupils.

- Targeted Support: We used "pupil progress meetings" to identify barriers to learning early. This helps us plan specific support for children who need it.
- Skilled Support Staff: Our Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) received training in specific interventions (like phonics and independent learning). They are now providing confident support in class.
- Handwriting Focus: We raised expectations for how work is presented. As a result, many pupils now demonstrate clearer, legible handwriting. - but this will need continued development.
- Coaching Model: Teachers used a "coaching cycle" to observe and learn from each other. This has led to consistent improvements in teaching quality across the school.
- **Overall Impact: Most teaching is now enabling pupils to make good progress, with strong relationships evident between staff and learners.**

Priority 3: Oracy (Speaking and Listening)

The Target: "To develop cohesive approaches to oracy in the languages of English and Welsh."

What we did and the impact:

- Confident Speakers: We introduced whole-school strategies (like "talking partners" and "sentence stems") to help children structure their speaking. Many pupils now speak confidently in front of others.
- Welsh Language: We embedded "Helpwr Heddiw" (daily Welsh helper) sessions. Pupils are using increasingly complex Welsh vocabulary and enjoying the language.
- Natural Use of Welsh: Staff and pupils are using "incidental Welsh" (everyday phrases) naturally throughout the school day, not just in Welsh lessons.
- Closing Gaps: In the Early Years, we used targeted speaking activities to help close gaps in communication skills for our youngest learners.
- Listening Skills: We placed a high value on listening as well as speaking. Pupils are showing better attention and responding thoughtfully to their friends.
- Staff Training: Teachers paired up to coach one another in oracy techniques, which has boosted staff confidence in delivering these lessons.
- **Overall Impact: Oracy is now a natural part of classroom life, with improved vocabulary and discussion skills seen across all subjects.**

Priority 4: Wellbeing and Environment

The Target: "To further build a supportive environment for all learners that continues to prioritise effective wellbeing and relationships."

What we did and the impact:

- Positive Behaviour: We revised our behaviour policy to focus on being "trauma-informed" and supportive. This has led to calm transitions and better behaviour management.
- Reduction in Exclusions: Because of these new consistent approaches, we saw a significant drop in exclusions (from 12 down to 4 compared to the previous year).
- Happy Pupils: Our focus on relationships is working. In our recent survey, 94.1% of learners reported feeling happy in school.
- Attendance: We worked hard to support families with attendance. We successfully reduced the number of pupils with very low attendance and narrowed the gap with the Local Authority average.
- Inclusive Support: We enhanced our "Universal Learning Provision" to ensure pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) get consistent support across all classes.
- Wellbeing Action: We created a new stakeholder group to drive our wellbeing work forward, ensuring we listen and respond to the needs of the school community.
- **Overall Impact: The school has created a highly supportive environment where pupils feel safe, happy, and ready to learn.**

Evaluation of Our Improvement Priorities 2024-2025

Thank you for your help in improving our school this year!



IMPROVING LEADERSHIP

- Teachers and staff have clear roles and responsibilities, helping them work more confidently and effectively.
- Children are taking on leadership roles, sharing ideas, and helping to make decisions that improve the school.
- Many families join in for celebrations, but we'd like to support more parents to attend learning-focused events and workshops.
- Partnerships with local groups and businesses give pupils exciting real-world experiences and raise the school's profile.
- Our governing body is stronger and works closely with school leaders to make sure we keep improving.



IMPROVING ASSESSMENT AND PROGRESSION THROUGH TEACHING

- The quality of teaching is good in our school.
- Teachers better understand how children should progress in their learning.
- We use tests and classroom checks to spot challenges in learning early and give the right help. This makes sure children make good progress from their starting points.
- Children know what they are learning and what to do next because feedback is clearer.
- Teaching assistants have continued to improve their skills and help children learn well.
- Handwriting and presentation have improved, and pupils take more pride in their work.



IMPROVING ORACY

- Children are more confident in speaking and using new words in lessons.
- Children speak more clearly, and have improved their listening skills in different situations, across the school.
- Teachers use clear strategies to help pupils talk and listen well in class.
- Welsh is used more often in lessons and daily routines.
- Pupils take part in regular speaking activities, like paired talk and group discussions.
- Staff have had training to make sure speaking and listening are taught in a consistent way.



BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND WELLBEING

- We have a new behaviour policy that is clear and fair, helping children feel safe and supported.
- Staff use the same positive approaches so pupils feel secure and happy in school.
- Wellbeing is a big focus – most children say they enjoy school and feel cared for.
- Support for pupils with additional needs is stronger, so all children can make good progress.
- Attendance is improving slowly because we work closely with families to help children come to school regularly.

